A recent record of *Monochroa arundinetella* (Stt.) (Lep.: Gelechiidae) in Wiltshire

On the outskirts of Staverton (VC 7) near Trowbridge there is a section of railway embankment immediately adjacent to the Bristol Avon. It lies upstream from a weir, which maintains the river and presumably the water table of immediately adjacent land at a constant level. This section, as with many other areas along the course of the river, can be flooded any time of the year, chiefly in winter but rarely for prolonged spells. This rather unusual set of circumstances has led to the establishment of a vegetation type which one would not normally expect on a railway embankment. It was at this site during the evening of 17 July 1996, between 19.00 hours BST and sunset, I amused myself by sweeping over coarse vegetation which included *Carex* spp. in limited quantity. I netted several micros, most of which were commoners, but one of their number caught my attention as it was quite obviously new to me. The following morning my brother Godfrey set the specimen. The moth was in reasonable condition and consultation of (Sokoloff & Bradford. 1993. *Br.J.ent.Nat. Hist.* **6**: 57-44) indicated that it could be *M. arundinetella*, but on noting that the species had not been recorded in the British Isles as an adult for about 100 years caution appeared to be required. *Monochroa lucidella* seemed a not too convincing candidate as among other fine details it seemed a little large in comparison to the moth in hand. In due course, my brother dissected and mounted the genitalia (male), but further progress was thwarted when it was discovered that the genitalia of *M. arundinetella* are not figured in Pierce & Metcalf (1935. *The genitalia of the tineid families of the Lepidoptera of the British Islands*). The genitalia figure of *M. lucidella*, which was also examined for comparison, exhibited some similarities to the specimen in hand but other differences indicated that further research was very necessary. We were not aware of other illustrated literature at the time and consultation of the very brief text referring to *M. arundinetella* in Uffen (1991. *Monochroa moyses* n. sp., a new gelechid moth mining the leaves of *Scirpus maritimus* L. *Br. J. Ent. nat. Hist.* **4**: 1-7) did not allow further progress and the moth was put aside for future investigation.

The acquisition of Elsner. *et al.*, (1999. *Die Palpenmotten (Lepidoptera, Gelechiidae) Mitteleuropas*) and Emmet & Langmaid (2002. *The Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland. Gelechiidae.* **4**(2) immediately offered the chance of confirming the specimen's identity. A comparison of the genitalia figured therein and the opportunity of comparing illustrations of the adult in several publications with the specimen left little doubt that it was *M. arundinetella*. In view of the rarity of this moth in Britain, it seemed advisable to obtain a second opinion. Thus, in early October 2002 we visited John Langmaid who kindly agreed to examine the specimen and genitalia slide. His examination confirmed the identity.

The site described above is a new location for *M. arundinetella* and this would appear to be the first record for Wiltshire since 1902 (Palmer, 2001. *The Microlepidoptera of Wiltshire*). As far as the remainder of the British Isles are concerned it would appear that the last adults taken would be of a similar vintage,

although larvae were recorded in 1927, 1951 and 1978 (thought to be of this species) (Parsons, 1995. A review of the scarce and threatened ethrniine, stathmopodine, and gelechiid moths of Great Britain. *UK Nature Conservation* No **16**). In this latter work, Parsons gives a very useful appraisal of the status of *M. arundinetella* and considering the discovery described above his comments ".....overlooked and under-recorded" and "searches for this species in some of its old haunts" would seem appropriate.

My brother and I would like to thank John Langmaid for examining the specimen, for his hospitality and a very pleasant afternoon in general conversation.– M. H. SMITH, 42 Bellefield Crescent Trowbridge Wiltshire BA14 8SR.

An inland colony of *Udea fulvalis* (Hb.) (Lep: Pyralidae) in suburban Hampshire

On the evening of 22 July 2002, I noticed three pyralid moths that had been attracted to the light of my bathroom window in Ringwood, Hampshire. Being an enthusiastic but inexperienced moth recorder, I captured one, and this was later identified as *Udea fulvalis* by Mark Parsons. Subsequent sightings of individuals were made regularly until 13 August, all either at lit windows or found resting in the house in the morning. Two of these additional sightings were also confirmed by Mark Parsons, one from a digital photo and one from a live specimen. Two dead specimens were subsequently found in the house, one of which was confirmed by Phil Sterling. No individuals were found in a 12 watt actinic moth trap that I run several times each week in the garden.

Udea fulvalis is considered an immigrant that is able to establish breeding colonies in Britain for a few years (Goater, 1986. *British Pyralid moths*. Harley Books). Goater and Norris (2001. *Moths of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight*. Pisces Publications), state that the species appears to have become established at Freshwater (Isle of Wight) and Christchurch (see also Cook 2000. *Atropos* number 10: 50) in recent years, also noting singletons in other coastal parts of Hampshire and Dorset (e.g. Lymington). The species may be more widespread along the coast, as it has been recorded at Hengistbury Head and throughout Bournemouth, Poole and Christchurch in recent years and in Swanage and Weymouth (Phil Sterling, pers. comm.).

Ringwood is situated on the western edge of the New Forest approximately 13 kilometres (eight miles) inland from the nearest coast (at Christchurch) and slightly further from Hengistbury Head or the coast at Bournemouth. The presence of a possible breeding colony in my small suburban garden (or in a neighbouring one) extends the current range of this species considerably, most notably away from the coastal zone.

My thanks to my colleague at Butterfly Conservation, Mark Parsons, and to Phil Sterling, Natural Environment Manager with Dorset County Council.– RICHARD FOX, Butterfly Conservation, Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Dorset BH20 5QP.